(In million tonnes)

Year	Demand	Supply
2008-09	72.72	75.67
2009-10	74.26	76.45

As per these projections, the requirement of wheat can be met from the domestic resources.

Strengthening of the PDS

2079.SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had decided to include pulses and some more foodgrains in the Public Distribution System (PDS);

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether Government also proposes to strengthen the Public Distribution System and remove the bottlenecks prevailing in the system throughout the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government has discussed the matter with the State Governments; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the State Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (f) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) focused on Below Poverty Line Families has been under implementation since June, 1997. As a segment of TPDS, for better targeting of food subsidy at the poorest of the BPL families, Antyodaya Anna Yojana has been under implementation since December, 2000. TPDS is operated under joint responsibility of Government of India and State Governments & UT Administrations. For successful implementation of TPDS, responsibilities are shared by Government of India and State & UT Governments. To facilitate smooth functioning of TPDS and to ensure that foodgrains allocated by Govt. of India to States and UTs are distributed properly to targeted BPL and AAY families, the required legal framework and regulatory mechanisms have been put in place. Apart from the provisions under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, Public Distribution (Control) Order, 2001 has been issued by Central Govt. in August, 2001. This frame work enables the States and UT Governments to take all required action to ensure proper functioning of TPDS.

To streamline functioning of TPDS, Government has taken a series of measures.

Apart from regular monitoring and review with State & UT Governments, the functioning of TPDS has also been evaluated from time to time through independent agencies by the Government

of India, Evaluation studies conducted by PEO, Planning Commission and ORG MARG in 2005 reported that there were diversions and leakages of foodgrains in many States and UTs, identification of targeted beneficiaries had exclusion and inclusion errors and functioning of fair price shops was not financially viable. Therefore, to streamline functioning of TPDS, the following steps have been taken by Government.

(i) For improving functioning of TPDS machinery, continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families, door step delivery of foodgrains to fair price shops, timely availability of foodgrains at fair price shops, and training of staff as well as vigilance committee members are being emphasized.

(ii) For greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, display of lists of BPL and AAY families at fair price shops, display of allocated quantities on websites, adoption and implementation of revised Citizens' Charter, monthly certification of delivery of foodgrains to fair price shops and their distribution to ration card holders, and taking a publicity-cum-awareness campaign have been initiated.

(iii) Improved vigilance at various levels and strict penal action against those involved in malpractices, including action against staff responsible for issuing ineligible ration cards and persons found in possession of such ration cards are being emphasized.

(iv) Introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels, smart-card-based delivery of essential commodities, use of global positioning system on vehicles transporting TPDS commodities and bar coding of ration cards, etc. is being piloted.

A nine-point action plan covering most of these measures, evolved in consultation with State and UT Governments is under implementation since July, 2006. To assess impact of all these initiatives, concurrent evaluation of TPDS has been taken up in 26 States & UTs. With these measures, functioning of TPDS is getting streamlined.

Mortality rates in the country

2080.SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that child mortality rate in India is higher than Bangladesh and Nepal;

(b) whether out of all the States five States have recorded higher mortality rates, and if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the schemes and programmes under his Ministry to minimize the infant mortality rate and for the development of children and budgetary allocations for each scheme; and

(d) what is the State-wise performance and how his Ministry monitors such programmes?